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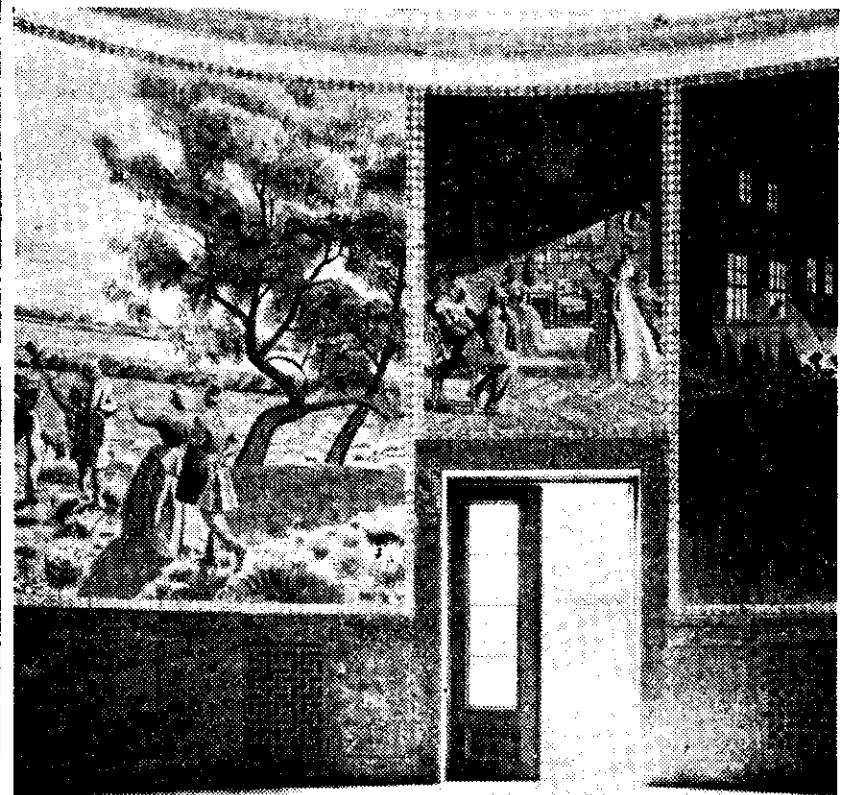
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Hans Andersen Anniversary

"OFTEN a rich child sits on a poor woman's lap," says an old Danish proverb. It was certainly true of the boy who was born to a poor family at Odense on April 2, 1805. Next Saturday, April 2, New Zealand children will be able to hear something of the story of Hans Christian Andersen, the Odense shoemaker's son who became one of the world's great tellers of fairy tales. And they will be able to hear an NZBS production of one of his most celebrated tales, *The Tinder Box*. The *Hans Andersen 150th Anniversary Programme* is to be broadcast from all YA and YZ stations at 5.15 p.m. on Andersen's birthday. *The Tinder Box* was adapted for broadcasting by Barbara Sleight, and the brief account of Andersen's life will be told by Colleen of 2YA.



HANS ANDERSEN and, at top, a corner of the memorial hall which now stands behind his home in Odense. The hall is decorated with murals showing scenes from his fairy-tales and from his own adventurous life

When towards the end of his life the world-famous writer was presented with the freedom of the city of Copenhagen, he said: "Life is the most beautiful of fairy tales. But the power and the glory are God's alone." In the fairy-tale called "The Ugly Duckling" we are told: "It doesn't matter about being born in the duckyard, if you were hatched out of a swan's egg." Thus in his tales Andersen drew upon memories of his childhood and other experiences and episodes of his life. Not only animals and plants, but inanimate things were given life and shape and character like real people. Like all good children's stories there is a great deal in his fairy-tales for adults, too. He shows us real greatness and the true ideals for which we should strive, while gently criticising human faults and weaknesses. And he draws our attention to the disregarded things, to all the little things in life that we tend to overlook. He gives everything "its rightful place,"

as he says, so that our eyes are opened to the greatness and richness of the world.

Hans Andersen's writings travelled farther afield than those of any other man of his country. On his 70th birthday he was presented with a rare gift, his tale "The Story of a Mother" printed in 15 languages and described as the world's best-known story. This was followed later by "The Emperor's New Clothes" printed in 25 languages, with illustrations by the artists of the various countries. Though he was born and brought up in a one-roomed cottage Hans Andersen won his place in the world as the guest of princes, kings and emperors, and he saw his life in the parable of his own story of "The Ugly Duckling."

N.Z. LISTENER, MARCH 25, 1955.